

circ drug
[Signature]

STATEMENT ISSUED BY

INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL STUDY MISSION TO SOUTHEAST ASIA

Representative Bella S. Abzug
Representative Joseph P. Addabbo
Representative Charles E. Rangel
Representative Pete Stark
Representative Lester L. Wolff

We are reporting on our investigation of narcotics traffic in Southeast Asia. This study mission was made for a number of reasons. We wanted to impress the heads of government in Southeast Asia with this nation's determination to stop the flow of drugs from that part of the world into the United States. Some nations continue to believe that drug abuse is our problem to solve without any assistance or cooperation from them. We believe that this purpose of our visit was accomplished, for there can be little doubt now in their minds as to the depth of our concern.

Secondly, we went to southeast Asia to inform American drug enforcement officers of our support and desire to assist them in providing the necessary implements and funding to fight this all out war. We talked to people on the scene, those whose activities bring them in contact daily with narcotics traffickers, to elicit their thoughts on what the Congress can do to help them and reinforce their efforts.

Finally, we want our missions in these nations to be more sensitive to the strength of our conviction that this dirty business, the most treacherous enemy ever faced by the United States is to be a number one priority. We went there to demand action and an unflinching commitment and that their efforts be intensified to eliminate the scourge of drug abuse from our country.

Gathering information to get an accurate picture was a complicated effort. First of all, we did not receive the extent and kind of cooperation from American officials that we expected. In many cases, we found ourselves having to rely on outside sources -- informers and the like -- to get answers to many of our questions either because our own people were unwilling to tell us what they knew, or they simply had only minimal information at their disposal. Although we spoke with em-

There is no question that the effectiveness and thoroughness of American international narcotics control is severely hampered by a lack of sheer manpower, and in particular, by a lack of trained manpower. The number of overseas personnel assigned to narcotics operations ^{must} be increased and ^{it is essential} that our agents be trained, not only in law enforcement and investigatory operations, but also possess a facility in language if they are to perform their jobs adequately.

The United States government position seems to be guided by the proposition that, regardless of the volume of drug traffic, it is more important to support established governments against insurgencies than to wipe out drug traffic. We were told that if a vigorous crackdown was conducted against opium growers, these farmers would be forced ^{and other dissident elements} "into the hands of the communists." The threat to the national interest of other nations seems to be of greater concern than the direct threat to the young people of this nation.

Not only does the U.S. seem to consider insurgencies more serious than opium production, but American support for many southeast Asian nations is continued despite rumored involvement of some southeast Asian officials in drug production and traffic. We are engaged in an all out war on narcotics production and traffic and we must use every weapon at our command to win this war. If it means an end to aid to a non-cooperating nation -- trade sanctions or even breaking relations -- it seems we must take action now; we must stop talking about drug addiction and do something about it.

We cannot expect foreign manufacturers of acetic anhydride to limit its production if the U.S., also a manufacturer, does not take steps to control it. It is clear that production of this chemical must be controlled. We will be writing to the nine American companies which produce acetic anhydride, asking their cooperation in controlling production. In this way, we hope to encourage other nations to follow our example, and limit their own production.

Secondly, crop substitution is facing a serious handicap in providing adequate income for those farmers who have discontinued opium production. Opium yields a bare living for the many hill farmers who produce poppy. While the U.N. has at

with crop substitution programs or they will return to poppy production. In all, only \$18,000 was necessary in the Thai project and the money couldn't be found. Eighteen thousand dollars to replace opium worth more than \$25 million at street level prices in New York -- and untold millions in street crime. Where is the logic of this policy?

We cannot overemphasize the persistent threat of drug abuse in this nation. Heroin continues to cripple a large segment of our population, and without a serious, multifaceted attack on the problem, we can never expect to control this threat. We are faced with a war -- a shooting war as potentially dangerous as the shooting war just about ended in Indo China. This new war demands commitment of resources as did the other. It is taking too long for the United States to mobilize for the fight against drug abuse. Our children and our future suffer because of this failure to act.

We will be issuing a report on our study mission which will back up each of these recommendations in detail. We have found our intercommittee backgrounds extremely useful in studying this problem and will continue to work together in the House. This study group will not disband as long as narcotics addiction continues to plague this country.

###